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Maximizing Potential For Vocational and Technical Education

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MCVE MEMBERSHIP – FY 1990-91

Fred "Rocky" Clark, Business Manager, IBEW Local 44, Butte. Serves on the MCVE Coordination and Communication Committee.

Jeff Dietz, Assistant Administrator, Billings Skyview High School. Serves as vice chairman of the MCVE Coordination and Communication Committee.

Ann Haagenstad, Director of Community Education and Vice Principal, Pineview Elementary, Colstrip. Serves on the MCVE Evaluation and Employment Committee.

Jon Jourdonnais, Orthodontist, Great Falls. MCVE chairman.

August "Gus" Korb, Assistant Vice President for Outreach and Program Development, Northern Montana College, Havre. Serves as vice chairman of the MCVE Evaluation and Employment Committee.

Dennis Lerum, Director, Missoula Vocational-Technical Center. Serves as chairman of the MCVE Policy and Planning Committee.

Jesse O'Hara, School Counselor, Great Falls School District. Serves on the MCVE Coordination and Communication Committee.

Robert Schaal, Dean of Educational Services, Flathead Valley Community College, Kalispell. Serves on the MCVE Policy and Planning Committee.

James " Jim" Schultz, Retired Vocational Agriculture Teacher, former State Representative, District #30, Lewistown. Serves as chairman of the MCVE Evaluation and Employment Committee.

Gordon H. Simmons, Retired Army Colonel, Consultant, Agronomy and Plant Breeding, Missoula. MCVE vice chairman and serves on the MCVE Policy and Planning Committee.

Charles "Chuck" Swysgood, Executive Director, Beaverhead Development Corp., State Representative, District #73, Dillon. Serves on the MCVE Evaluation and Employment Committee.

Avis Ann "Sanny" Tobin, Management Consultant, Helena. Serves as chairman of the MCVE Coordination and Communication Committee.

Howard Williams, Businessman, Pioneer Telephone Service, Helena. Serves on the MCVE Policy and Planning Committee.

COUNCIL STAFF

James W. Fitzpatrick
Executive Director
Lucie Willson
Administrative Assistant

Executive Management Building
1228 - 11th Avenue
Helena, MT 59620
Phone - 406-444-2964

MONTANA COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT BUILDING
1228 11TH AVENUE

STATE OF MONTANA

(406) 444-2964
HELENA, MONTANA 59620

JAMES W. FITZPATRICK
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

March 1, 1991

The Honorable Stan Stephens
Governor of Montana
Executive Office, State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Governor Stephens:

The Montana Council on Vocational Education submits this annual report addressing state council mandates as set forth in the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984. This report contains an overview of council responsibilities, activities, projects, and recommendations for the planning period, 1989 - 1990. In addition to this annual report, the council is mandated to compile and distribute a biennial report which analyzes and addresses the distribution and expenditure of federal vocational education funds. These reports will also be distributed to the Board of Regents, Office of Commissioner of Higher Education, Office of Public Instruction, and other appropriate federal and state agencies.

Major changes are occurring in the workforce: changing demographics, rapid advances in technology, international competition, and critical labor shortages, particularly in the business, health, trade, technical, and service areas. Montana's secondary and postsecondary vocational technical education systems can effectively respond to these changes by preparing a workforce with the knowledge, skills, and competencies essential in the workplace. However, adequate resources and leadership must be provided to maintain support, and extend state-of-the-art programming. In this regard, the Council has addressed major vocational technical education issues and concerns, and provided key recommendations supported by rationale statements.

The Council is hopeful this report will be useful to officials at state and local levels in their efforts to better formulate policies and direction for the improvement of Montana secondary and postsecondary vocational technical education systems and programs.

In closing, the Council appreciates your leadership and cooperation in support of Montana's vocational technical education.

Sincerely,

Jon Jourdonnais
Dr. Jon Jourdonnais
Chairman

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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INTRODUCTION

This report was compiled by the Montana Council on Vocational Education in accordance with Section 112(d)(2), of the 1984 Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act for fiscal years 1989 and 1990. The report contains an overview of Council mandated duties and responsibilities, activities, public hearings, projects, and recommendations.

During the planning period, the Council provided significant input on college admission standards and state accreditation standards, submitted numerous position papers on concerns vital to secondary and postsecondary vocational technical education, conducted public hearings, provided input on development of state and federal vocational education legislation, conducted surveys and reports, provided testimony on vocational technical education to the Governor's Postsecondary Education Commission for the Nineties and Beyond, developed a proclamation supporting vocational student organizations, conducted a major project to improve coordination and articulation between vocational education, JTPA , and other job training delivery systems, and provided input on the development of the State Plan for Vocational Education. In addition, the council addressed many other issues in accordance with mandated responsibilities.

Council sponsored activities during the planning period were helpful in identifying and addressing major issues, concerns, and needs for Montana's secondary and postsecondary vocational technical education systems. Some of the major areas identified include the need to:

- address a decrease in secondary and postsecondary vocational technical education enrollments;
- establish a stable and improved funding system to maintain, upgrade, and modernize vocational education delivery systems;
- establish a telecommunications network for professional development and instructional purposes;
- develop greater flexibility in the certification process which would provide for cross-credit equivalent credit and applied vocational education courses;
- promote greater emphasis on integration and mutual reinforcement of academic and vocational competencies and technology;
- develop articulation policies and agreements for vocational education courses and programs at all levels;
- promote the development of partnerships between secondary and postsecondary vocational technical education and the private sector for purposes of developing curricular and training programs consistent with employer needs;
- promote closer cooperation and coordination between vocational education, JTPA, and other delivery systems;
- promote increased participation of special populations in secondary and postsecondary vocational technical education programs;
- provide continued support and resources for a Center for Research, Curriculum, and Professional Development, in Montana; and
- develop a long range plan for Montana's vocational education delivery systems.

One of the significant developments during the planning period was passage of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments of 1990. The purpose of this Act is to make the United States more competitive in the world economy by developing more fully the academic and occupational skills of all segments of the population. This Act is a major change from the 1984 Perkins Act as evidenced by the following:

- Drives federal funds directly to secondary schools and postsecondary institutions.
- Emphasizes integration and mutual reinforcement of academic and vocational competencies, and technology.

- Eliminates many of the fiscal constraints, such as matching excess cost requirements and set-asides for handicapped and disadvantaged, but maintains emphasis on special population groups.
- Promotes accountability by measuring achievement against performance standards.

In addition, the Act made significant changes in the organization, duties, and mandates for state councils on vocational education.

The Council is hopeful this report will be useful to state agency personnel and to vocational educators in their efforts to improve, refine, upgrade, and develop programs and policies consistent with student and employer training needs.

I COUNCIL STRUCTURE

The Montana Council on Vocational Education (MCVE), appointed by the Governor, consists of 13 members. Seven represent the private sector (two of these are from labor) and six represent secondary and postsecondary institutions, including career guidance and counseling, special populations, (single parents or homemakers; incarcerated persons; and persons in sex equity programs), and special education.

COUNCIL STRUCTURE

II COUNCIL PURPOSE

The Montana Council on Vocational Education was created in 1985, by Executive Order No. 3-85 to comply with the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 (Perkins Act), P.L. 98-524, which replaced the Vocational Education Act of 1963. The Act requires each state to establish a State Council on Vocational Education, broadly representative of citizens and groups having an interest in vocational education. The State Council assumes the role of the previous State Advisory Council on Vocational Education, and, although it was reduced in size from twenty-three members to thirteen, the council was assigned new and expanded responsibilities.

COUNCIL PURPOSE

The new responsibilities mandated in the Perkins Act require the Council to become involved in making reports and recommendations on the following issues: policies the State should pursue to strengthen vocational education; initiatives and methods the private sector could undertake to assist in the modernization of vocational education programs; the adequacy and effectiveness of coordination that takes place between vocational education and the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA); and the adequacy and effectiveness of the vocational education delivery systems assisted under the Perkins and Job Training Partnership Acts. The State Council works with the sole state agent for vocational education (State Board of Regents of Higher Education), the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) and other state agencies to carry out many of its responsibilities.

The passage of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-392), effective July 1, 1991, authorizes state councils, and provides secondary, postsecondary, and adult vocational education programs with federal assistance for another five years.

III COUNCIL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Carl Perkins Act required the State Council to --

- advise the State Board of Regents (State Board) on the development of the State Plan for vocational education.
- advise the State Board and make reports to the Governor, business community and general public concerning:
  - policies the state should pursue to strengthen vocational education
  - initiatives and methods the private sector could undertake to help modernize vocational education.
- analyze and report on the distribution of spending for vocational education.
- analyze and report on the availability of vocational education.
- consult with the State Board on the establishment of evaluation criteria for vocational education programs.
- Submit recommendations to the State Board on the conduct of vocational education programs which emphasize the use of business concerns and labor organizations.

COUNCIL DUTIES AND RESPON-SIBILITIES

- assess the distribution of financial assistance provided under the Perkins Act, with particular attention to the distribution of funds between secondary and postsecondary institutions.
- recommend procedures to the State Board to ensure and enhance public participation, particularly that of local employers and local labor organizations, providing vocational education at the local level.
- report to the State Board on the extent to which special populations have equal access to quality vocational education programs.
- advise the Governor, State Board, State Job Training Coordinating Council, U.S. Secretary of Education, and U.S. Secretary of Labor concerning:
  - an evaluation of the vocational education program delivery systems assisted under the Perkins Act and under JTPA; and
  - the adequacy and effectiveness of the coordination between vocational education and JTPA.
- consult with the State Board on the establishment of technical committees.
- conduct at least one meeting to secure the views of the public on vocational education.

IV COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Standing Committees:

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

The State Council standing committee organization is comprised of a Policy and Planning, Evaluation and Employment, and Coordination and Communication Committee. During the 1989 - 1990 planning period, these committees addressed major vocational technical education issues and concerns and state council mandated responsibilities. In addition, in FY90 an ad hoc committee was appointed to look at alternatives for providing vocational education opportunities in the secondary schools. Major activities accomplished by each of the committees for the planning period are reported below:

A. POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

1. Advised the sole state agent on the development of the State Plan for Vocational Education, Fiscal Years 1991 - 1992, and subsequent amendments.
2. Reviewed, revised, and updated MCVE Policy Manual.
3. Forwarded a letter addressing MCVE's concern regarding Montana School Accreditation Standards and college entrance requirements, and alternatives to providing opportunity for vocational education to: Superintendents; Principals; Chair, Board of Education; Chair, Board of Regents; and Secondary Vocational Education Director, OPI.
4. Recommended appointment of an ad hoc committee to develop a position paper in response to the Board of Public Education request for more definitive information relating to the Council's recommendations regarding vocational education opportunities in Montana schools.
5. Reviewed and reported on development of legislation regarding reauthorization of the Perkins Act.
6. Responded to a request concerning the licensed practical nurses training, in Montana.
7. Developed a position statement on postsecondary vocational technical education which was presented to the Postsecondary Education Commission for the Nineties & Beyond.
8. Developed Vocational Student Organization Proclamation which was adopted by MCVE and distributed to Montana vocational student organizations.
9. Submitted a letter to Chairman, Job Training Coordinating Council, stating MCVE's concern with the adopted funding option for projects funded under the 8% JTPA coordination funds.

10. Reviewed sole state agent merger definition, policies, and proposals for merging vocational technical centers with institutions of higher education.

B. EVALUATION AND EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

1. Reviewed the criteria for evaluation of secondary and postsecondary vocational education programs and forwarded recommendations to the sole state agent and Office of Public Instruction.
2. Reviewed State Occupational Information Coordinating Council(SOICC) publication, Career Development Guidelines, and forwarded statement of support for this project.
3. Initiated a project with other agencies, "A Quality Workforce: The Key to Economic Development," to focus on the status, role, and potential of Montana's vocational training systems and service providers, in Montana's economic development.
4. Developed, distributed, and analyzed surveys of secondary and postsecondary vocational education and job training service providers and employers to determine training programs consistent with employer needs.
5. Received and reviewed report, from MCVE committee member, on extent to which special populations are provided access to quality secondary vocational education programs and recommendations to guarantee equal access.
6. Participated in on-site evaluations in Missoula, Great Falls, and Billings of the projects funded under the 8% JTPA coordination funds.
7. Reviewed and recommended project and contracts to assess state vocational education enrollments.

C. COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

1. Conducted yearly public hearings.
2. Reviewed National Association of State Councils on Vocational Education (NASCOVE) National Awareness Initiative and recommended MCVE support. (This was a joint cooperative venture with the National Council on Vocational Education in a project to promote vocational technical education opportunities nationally.)
3. Developed, for distribution to local advisory councils, a video, brochure, and member and leadership guides.
4. Nominated and sponsored, in cooperation with the sole state agent, an outstanding local advisory council, for the Vocational Instructional Program Award, presented at the National State Director's meeting in Washington, D.C.
5. Reviewed activities of and participated in the Vocational Technical Education Marketing Project.
6. Developed and distributed a yearly council membership brochure.
7. Reviewed and recommended MCVE sponsorship and support of the distribution of "Career Success Magazine."
8. Reviewed and recommended MCVE support and participation in the SOICC Conference titled, "Career Planning - A Lifelong Process."
9. Reviewed agenda and recommended MCVE participation in the Montana JOBS Conference.

D. MCVE AD HOC COMMITTEE

The MCVE Policy and Planning Committee developed and distributed a memorandum encouraging Montana school administrators and Boards of Trustees to utilize alternatives in the accreditation standards for delivery of vocational education programs to students. As a follow-up, the Board of Public Education encouraged the Council to cite strategies and examples school districts could utilize for offering vocational education courses within this framework.

An ad hoc committee was formed by the council to formulate options and approaches for offering vocational education courses for academic credit and to respond to the Board of Public Education request. A report, "Response to the Board of Public Education Regarding Vocational Education Opportunities in Montana Secondary Schools" was drafted by the committee. This report, which includes the following recommendations, was presented to the Board of Public Education at their January 1991 meeting:

1. High School district boards of trustees, administrators, and faculty review and favorably consider the alternatives/methods offered in the MCVE report, to enhance vocational education opportunities.
2. The Board of Public Education take a leadership role and encourage high school district boards of trustees to implement alternatives/methods offered in the MCVE report to enhance vocational education opportunities.
3. The Board of Public Education review high school accreditation standards for the purpose of strengthening high school career development efforts and resulting program and graduation requirements in terms of student outcome or specific content.

V PUBLIC HEARINGS CONDUCTED

PUBLIC HEARINGS CONDUCTED

The Perkins Act requires that "the public is given an opportunity to express views concerning the vocational education program of the State." To fulfill this requirement, the State Council has conducted public hearings as summarized below.

Testimony presented at the hearings was a valuable source of information for Council discussions and research efforts for developing position papers, issue statements, and recommendations.

PUBLIC HEARINGS 1989

Articulation and Cross Credit Courses was the topic for a public hearing conducted October 20, 1989, in conjunction with the Montana Vocational Association State Leadership Conference in Billings. Participants testified as to the **status, barriers,** and **implementation** of articulation and cross credit courses in Montana schools. Following is a summary of the testimony presented:

Status of Articulation
Curriculum articulation does exist in Montana's secondary schools, and the Board of Regents has a policy in place for transfer of credits between the six university units and community colleges, however, articulation agreements are limited, as is articulation between secondary and postsecondary institutions.

Barriers for Articulation
The major barriers to implementing articulation are communication, "turf" battles, funding, lack of competency identification, and differences in course content.

Implementation of Articulation
Examples of articulation agreements were cited: (1) Great Falls Vocational Technical Center and Northern Montana College; (2) Flathead High School and Flathead Valley Community College, in Kalispell; and (3) Summer Youth Skills and Technical Project of the Northwest Montana Human Resources Council and Flathead High School, Kalispell.

Status of Cross Credit
A few high schools and postsecondary institutions allow some vocational education courses to satisfy academic requirement, however, it is not the norm.

Barriers for Cross Credit
The problem of "turf", local requirements restricting the opportunities of students to take vocational education classes, standards pertaining to certification, and outdated programs were identified as the major barriers.

Implementation of Cross Credit
Examples of how cross credit is being implemented were cited and recommendations for implementation of cross credit included team teaching, eliminating duplication of course offerings, and accountability.

PUBLIC HEARINGS 1990

Insuring Secondary Vocational Education Offerings was the topic for the first public hearing conducted in 1990 at the Missoula Vo-Tech Center, March 9. Testimony was received on this topic from the Assistant Superintendent, Missoula County High School, and Missoula secondary vocational educators. They identified concerns of administrators, teachers, counselors, and students in the Missoula high schools in response to the following questions:

- What effect has the emphasis on academics had on vocational education enrollments and course offerings?

- What **strategies, approaches,** and **options** can you suggest to insure participation in secondary vocational education offerings?

Participants stated vocational education classes have experienced a drastic reduction in enrollment because of increased academic and college entrance requirements. Students feel frustration and become "burnt out" because of the necessity to plan their class schedules around requirements for high school graduation and, particularly, college entrance requirements.

They testified vocational education courses are necessary to train skilled workers; for some persons, the basic academic courses are practical; and only 25% of high school graduates will receive college diplomas. Since vocational education programs are extremely important to the majority of students, the emphasis on these programs should be increased, not decreased, and there is a need to promote vocational education programs. One suggestion was to update vocational education courses and course names should be changed to reflect the course content. Other strategies to insure participation in secondary vocational education were: a career tracking system for high school students; vocational education courses as a graduation requirement; agreement and consensus on graduation and entrance requirements between the Montana University System and Montana High Schools; and cross credit and team teaching between academic and vocational education programs to provide more opportunity for students to take vocational education courses.

Addressing Critical Issues in Vocational Technical Education: What are the issues? How can they be resolved?, was the topic for the second 1990 public hearing, conducted at Flathead Valley Community College, Kalispell, May 11, 1990. Secondary and postsecondary administrators, educators, and students participated in the hearing. Major issues presented to the council were:

1. Secondary and postsecondary vocational education is important for training students who are not college-bound, to provide individuals with employable skills, for meeting the needs of employers, and to train a highly skilled and educated workforce to remain competitive in an international market.

2. Provide state communication network seminars and training sessions for instructors, in the state and also outside the state.

3. A better funding base for delivery of vocational education programs is needed.

4. Students must learn to read, write, work with numbers - they must learn how to learn. Vocational education must become more innovative and train individuals for the society they will be working in - vocational education is not the problem in education, it is the solution.

5. Review the certification process and methods to make cross credit feasible so students have the opportunity to get both academic credit and vocational education in one program.

6. Local advisory councils must be more directly involved and active in vocational education programs.

7. Graduation and college entrance requirements are making vocational education classes less accessible. Students are having to make a choice of either taking vocational education classes which have valuable skills or taking the academic course for college entrance requirements.

8. High schools and colleges should cooperate - there is a need for 2 + 2 programs and articulation agreements.

VI MCVE PROJECTS

MCVE PROJECTS

VOCATIONAL ENROLLMENT TRENDS IN MONTANA - 1983 - 1990

In fiscal year 1990, the State Council entered into two contractual agreements to determine the status of Montana vocational technical education at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

The contracts included a survey of Montana secondary schools to compile data and narrative information to be used in the final report. A report titled, "Vocational Enrollment Trends in Montana - 1983 -1990" was completed in the fall of 1990. This report shows that enrollment is declining in vocational courses at both the secondary and postsecondary levels in Montana, and nationwide.

This report includes sections on the influence of national job trends, vocational alliance with business and industry, vocational maturity and student occupational interest, and articulation in vocational education programs. Secondary and postsecondary enrollment statistics, as well as vocational student organization membership, for the past seven years, is reported. The report indicates enrollment in vocational classes at the high school level are decreasing more than total high school enrollments, and postsecondary enrollments are down, with both levels experiencing cuts in classes and programs. The survey of vocational educators asked the question, "What needs to be done to make vocational education a more integral part of

the high school curriculum in Montana public schools?" and educators responses are listed below:

40% Vocational Education should be required for graduation and college entrance or graduation requirements lowered.

21% The use of cross credits, allowing Business Mathematics to count as a Mathematics class or Vocational-Agriculture classes counting as a Science class should be allowed.

15% The emphasis of how many students actually go to college or need a college degree should be brought out.

15% Promotion of vocational departments needs to be improved. Educate the public, students, Board of Regents, Office of Public Instruction, and school administrators of the importance of vocational education.

6% Additional funding and upgrading equipment.

3% Need for vocational counselors.

Seven recommendations given in the report for increasing vocational enrollment are based on surveys of Montana high schools, state and national publications, and personal interviews with vocational leaders in Montana. They are:

1. Establish ties with business and labor
2. Strengthen the academic content of vocational courses.
3. Influence changes in graduation and college entrance requirements.
4. Establish an individualized, ongoing, annual review of each student.
5. Consider promoting new vocational content areas.
6. Incorporate technology into the classroom.
7. Recognize achievements of students and graduates.

A QUALITY WORKFORCE -- THE KEY TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Montana Council on Vocational Education initiated a project, "A Quality Workforce -- The Key to Economic Development," in partnership with other agencies, schools, institutions, and associations. The primary goals of this effort were to:

- foster a closer working relationship between vocational technical education, job training programs, and other service delivery systems;

- identify the training needs and partnerships which exist between the service delivery systems and private sector; and

- identify areas where vocational technical education, job training, and other service delivery systems can enhance and more effectively contribute to Montana's economic development.

A Steering Committee was organized to plan and carry out activities to accomplish the project goals. These activities included:

1. Compilation of a handbook, "Montana's Economy, Montana's Workforce, Tools for Economic Development." This handbook includes sections developed by the Department of Commerce on the status of Montana's economy, economic conditions, goals, short and long range plans, and strategies for strengthening Montana's economy; the Research and

Analysis Bureau of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, on the status of Montana's workforce, demographics, labor supply and demand, and identification of skills and training employees will need; and the various delivery systems (Secondary Vocational Education, Postsecondary Vocational Technical Education, Tribal Colleges, Job Training Partnership Act, Adult Basic Education, Apprenticeship and Training, and Montana JOBS Program) outlining the purpose, participants, programs and course offerings, contributions to Montana's economy, contacts for information, and examples of exemplary partnerships for each of these areas.

2. A survey of Montana employers was conducted to obtain employers' perceptions of the skills desired in their employees; the essential factors for a favorable climate for economic development; the present and future role of vocational technical education, job training, apprenticeship, adult education, and human resource programs in economic development; and the changes or improvements to make these programs more responsive to economic development. The results of this survey are contained in the publication, "Survey Results - Montana Employers."

3. A survey of secondary and postsecondary vocational technical administrators and instructors, JTPA personnel, program operators, and other delivery system personnel to determine linkages or partnerships which presently exist with business and industry, and to identify how these delivery systems can be better utilized for economic development purposes. The results of this survey are contained in the publication, "Survey Results - Vocational Technical and Job Training Service Providers."

The project culminated with a one-day Conference, on November 1, 1990, in Helena. The main sessions on the agenda included:

Keynote Address - Strategies for Economic Development

Montana's Economy in a Changing World

Montana's Workforce: Projections, Trends and Employment Needs

Tools for Economic Development: Montana's Delivery Systems for Training a Quality Workforce

Training Tomorrow's Workforce: A Perspective from Business, Labor, and Industry

Strategies for Improving Linkages and Coordination Between Vocational Education, Job Training, and Other Delivery Systems

Governor Stan Stephens delivered the keynote address and session panelists included persons from Montana business, industry and labor; State Departments of Labor and Industry, Commerce, and Social and Rehabilitation Services; and the various vocational education and job training delivery systems.

* All publications referenced in the two projects are available upon request from the Montana Council on Vocational Education, Executive Management Building, 1228 - 11th Avenue, Helena, MT 59620.

VII COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were formulated on the basis of council member's expertise, research, and data collection by council members and staff, from conferences conducted by the Council, testimony presented at public hearings from the private and public sectors, from secondary and postsecondary vocational technical educators, and from administrative and other personnel in the areas of JTPA, adult basic education, apprenticeship, tribal colleges, and various state agencies.

COORDINATION

The Governor establish a strategic planning and coordinating consortium broadly representative of the public and private sector for the purpose of maximizing utilization of secondary and postsecondary vocational technical education, JTPA, apprenticeship, adult basic education and other delivery systems for meeting Montana's current and future training and retraining workforce needs.

Montana needs an overarching plan to better coordinate articulation efforts between secondary and postsecondary vocational technical education, community colleges, JTPA and other job training service delivery systems. The consortium should include, but not be limited to, representation from the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education; Office of Public Instruction; community colleges; tribal colleges; Montana Departments of Labor and Industry, Commerce, and Social and Rehabilitation Services; Montana Chamber of Commerce; the private sector; and the Montana Council on Vocational Education.

The consortium would have responsibility for developing a long range training plan; identifying workforce skills, employer needs, workforce competencies and strategies; and fostering cooperative relationships between secondary and postsecondary vocational technical education, JTPA and other job training delivery systems.

This recommendation is formulated on the outcomes identified in the Council project titled, "A Quality Workforce -- The Key to Economic Development." A detailed description of this project is contained on pages 7-8 of this report.

FUNDING

The Montana Legislature provide a stable and adequate funding system for Montana's secondary and postsecondary vocational technical education systems to effectively carry out respective mission, role, scope, responsibilities, and contribution to Montana's economic development and training needs.

Montana's economic strength, productivity, and competitiveness, nationally and internationally, depends on our capacity to build and maintain a quality workforce. Labor market projections indicate that approximately 80 percent of the future jobs can be filled by persons with a high school diploma and some vocational and technical training. Based on information provided by the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, nationally, employment will increase considerably in many occupations by the year 2000; the number of technicians and related support workers will grow by 38 percent; public service workers will increase by 31 percent; and approximately 50,000 jobs are projected for Montana. Further, 40 percent of Montana employers, responding to a council survey in 1990, reported they had utilized customized training provided by Montana vocational education delivery systems and were very satisfied with the training.

Sixty-three percent of the respondents reported they would be interested in utilizing vocational technical training for their employees.

Montana secondary vocational education and postsecondary vocational technical education systems must receive adequate funding necessary to improve, modernize and develop quality vocational education programs in order to meet our state and nation's existing and future workforce needs.

The Montana Legislature discontinue appropriating federal funds received under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Amendments of 1990 to postsecondary vocational technical centers.

The appropriation of Perkins funds is inconsistent and in violation of Section 516(a) and B(2) of P.L. 101-392 of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Amendments of 1990 and the Montana State Plan for Vocational Technical Education 1991-92. Specific language from the State Plan and current law reads:

State Plan

"Federal funds made available under the Act will be used to supplement, and to the extent practicable, increase the amount of state and local funds that would in the absence of such federal funds be made available for the uses specified in the State Plan, and will in no case supplant such state or local funds."

Perkins Act

"No State shall take into consideration payments under this Act in determining, for any educational agency or institution in that State, the eligibility for State aid, or the amount of State aid, with respect to public education within the State."

In 1990, four Montana school districts filed suit in Montana First Judicial District Court, Lewis and Clark County, concerning this issue. The Judge ruled that since the case involved federal funds, the Circuit Court of Appeals had jurisdiction, not the District Court.

Further, a bill was introduced in the Montana Legislature in 1991, which would basically prohibit use of Perkins funds to supplant state and local funding.

VO-ED TEACHER EDUCATION

Vo-Ed Teacher Education

The Board of Regents, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, Office of Public Instruction, and Board of Public Education examine vocational teacher training needs in Montana and take appropriate action to resolve deficiencies.

This concern is based on several factors: (1) The elimination of vocational teacher education programs; (2) The number of vocational teachers completing teacher training programs, and of these, the number accepting employment in fields other than education, and outside the state; (3) The reduction in numbers of students enrolling in vocational teacher education programs; and (4) An aging vocational education teacher workforce.

Based on a cursory examination of the problem, the Council has identified that vocational teacher training programs for Marketing, Home Economics, Business Education, and Industrial Arts have been eliminated or reduced at various units of the Montana University System. Currently, Montana has no Marketing Education teacher training program, however, Montana schools offer this program. Secondly, significant numbers of students completing programs do not enter the teaching field. For example, five Vocational Agriculture teachers graduated from Montana State University in 1990, but none entered the teaching profession. During the past two years, 17 potential teachers

completed the Home Economics Teacher Education Program. Of this number, eight are teaching in Montana.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ENROLLMENTS

The Office of Public Instruction and Board of Public Education assess, analyze and report findings on the impact of increased academic requirements, graduation requirements, college admission policy, and other relevant factors on Montana's secondary vocational education enrollments, program access, and vocational education opportunities.

Based on a national study titled, "Vocational Enrollment Patterns in an Era of Reform, Transitions and Renewal," 30 states were identified as experiencing an overall decrease in vocational enrollments. Following review and analysis of this study, the Montana Council on Vocational Education conducted a study, under contractual agreement, to determine the status of vocational education enrollments and vocational opportunities for Montana's secondary students. Questionnaires were sent to 252 vocational educators and administrators employed in Montana's public high schools during the 1989-90 school year. Based on the survey results:

- 65% of the respondents stated a decrease in enrollments in vocational education classes. Most of the decreases occurred from 1987-1989, when the accreditation and college admission standards went into effect.
- 41.1% of the respondents reported that vocational classes were lost from the curriculum with most classes lost from 1987-1989. Multiple class sections in vocational education were also lost, most of them during 1989. Ten vocational education programs were dropped from the curriculum during the seven year period from 1983-1990, and future losses were expected.

Data from other reliable sources indicate a 31% decline in vocational education enrollments while school enrollments have only declined 3.4%. This represents a real decline of approximately 28% in vocational education enrollments.

Specific observations of some local educators that identify why vocational education opportunities are diminished beyond the generalization of increased graduation and college entrance requirements are:

- With increased graduation and college entrance requirements there is greater opportunity for failure. Students who fail a required course find the elective options available to them severely restricted because of the need to retake a requirement. Students who fail academic courses find vocational courses unavailable because of their need to make up courses.
- Increased graduation and college entrance requirements cause some schools to replace vocational with academic courses.
- The students feel pressure to meet high school graduation requirements "just in case" they decide to try college.
- Enrollment in vocational courses may be lacking because of the failure to modernize some vocational education courses and offer contemporary curriculum.

The structure and delivery systems of our secondary schools must not be designed solely for the college bound. Requiring more courses does not mean that students will perform better. Requiring more of the same results in students not having the opportunity to take courses consistent with their interest, aptitude, and abilities. What may be considered an elective course to one student may be a required course for another student with different

goals. The opportunity for students to choose courses consistent with their future career goals is diminishing.

In addition to the report previously referenced, the Council developed a position paper on vocational education opportunities in Montana's secondary schools which includes a section on enhancing vocational education opportunities and recommendations to the Board of Public Education, high school boards of trustees, school administrators, and instructors. This report is available on request from the State Council.

CENTER FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Center for Vocational Education

The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education and Office of Public Instruction seek long-range funding and support for a Center for Research, Curriculum, and Personnel Development for Vocational Education in Montana.

The Council strongly supports a Vocational Education Center for Research, Curriculum, and Personnel Development in Montana. The Center would provide valuable service to appropriate state agencies, boards, commissions, councils, and to vocational educators throughout the State. The Center would perform vital functions, i.e. conducting and analyzing research for curriculum and professional development purposes, conducting follow-up studies of graduates, assessing employer needs, documenting whether current training meets employer needs, and providing information and expertise to Montana secondary and postsecondary vocational educators. In addition to data collection and analysis the Center could:

- facilitate the implementation of Federal legislation by performing functions mandated in the new Perkins Act, i.e., state-wide needs assessment; technical committee responsibilities; development of performance standards and measures, including competencies;
- provide information and data to the Committee of Practitioners;
- assist schools and institutions in implementing tech-prep and cross credit programs;
- provide other services for the sole state agent and Office of Public Instruction, such as inservice and professional development for curriculum specialists, and administrative and instructional personnel;
- assist schools and postsecondary vocational technical education institutions in assessing resources for programmatic development.

The services, expertise, and technical assistance provided by the Center would contribute significantly to the improvement of Montana's secondary vocational education schools and postsecondary vocational technical institutions. The services enumerated above would eliminate duplication of effort. For example, many activities could be done on a state-wide basis and the information would be readily available to decision makers and practitioners throughout the state.

ARTICULATION

Articulation

The Montana Board of Public Education and the Montana Board of Regents, in consultation with the Office of Commissioner of Higher Education and Office of Public Instruction, develop articulation policies for vocational education courses and programs for all levels.

Articulation has been defined as a "planned process linking two or more education systems within a community to help students make a smooth transition from one level of instruction to another without experiencing delay or loss of credit."

Among the goals listed in the current Montana State Plan for Vocational Education are those specifically related to articulation, indicating that in secondary schools competency

measures will be specified for all occupational programs, and that competency testing for secondary vocational education completers will be initiated. The Plan also includes a directive for the development of coordinated agreements between secondary and postsecondary institutions to provide for the forward progress of students, and to also establish procedures to facilitate transfer of credits for technical and vocational courses between two- and four-year institutions. (From **Time to Commence - Articulation in Vocational Technical Education in Montana** published by the Center for Vocational Education, Northern Montana College)

In a public hearing held by the Montana Council on Vocational Education, titled, "Articulation and Cross Credit Courses - Status, Barriers, and Implementation," conducted in October 1989, participants stated that curriculum articulation does exist in some Montana secondary schools. The Board of Regents has a policy in place for transfer of credits between the six university units and community colleges, however, articulation agreements are limited.

Persons testifying at the public hearing identified the following factors as barriers to implementing articulation in Montana's schools: communication, "turf" issues, funding, lack of agreement on competency identification, and differences in course content. It is important that vocational educators and administrators be first of all, student advocates. Priority should be given to students' needs.

Based on testimony received at the public hearing, it was evident that the articulation process benefits students, parents, taxpayers, employees, employers, and the sending and receiving institutions. Further, the recently reauthorized Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990, Title III, Part E, includes provision and funding for tech-prep education. This section of the Act is to: provide planning and demonstration grants to consortia of local educational agencies and postsecondary education institutions for the development and operation of four-year programs designed to provide tech-prep education leading to a two-year associate degree or a two-year certificate and secondly, to provide, in a systematic manner, strong, comprehensive links between secondary schools and postsecondary educational institutions. These efforts will be carried out under an articulation agreement between the participants in the consortium. Based on these and other developments, it is essential that policy or standards be developed immediately by the Board of Regents and Board of Public Education

REPRESENTATION OF VO-ED ON BOARDS

The Governor's appointment to the Board of Regents and the Board of Public Education include individuals who are knowledgeable, experienced and have an interest in vocational technical education.

Representation of Vo-Ed on Boards

The State Council encourages representation on the Board of Public Education and Board of Regents by individuals who are knowledgeable of and experienced in vocational technical education. Major forces in our economy, technology, government, and society are changing the environment in which vocational education must serve our citizens. These critical and complex issues, i.e., major trends impacting educational and training requirements, closer involvement and working relationships between educators and employers, role of vocational education in economic development, and a changing technology necessitate increased understanding and knowledge of vocational education and of employer needs. Further, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act greatly expands the federal government's job related efforts. The Act emphasizes service to "special populations," including the poor, the handicapped, the economically disadvantaged, disabled, single parents, foster children, those not served because of sex bias, and those with limited English proficiency. The purpose of this Act

is to make the United States more competitive in the world economy by developing more fully the academic and occupational skills of these segments of the population. This purpose will principally be achieved through concentrating resources on improving educational programs leading to academic and occupational skill competencies needed to work in a technologically advanced society. For these reasons, the Council recommends that individuals representative of and experienced in vocational technical education be appointed to the two Boards.

VOCATIONAL STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Vocational Student Organizations

Appropriate State educational agencies provide technical and support services to assist vocational student organizations (VSO's) in their efforts to improve the quality and relevance of instruction, develop student leadership, enhance citizenship responsibilities, promote equal access, and serve students of special populations.

The Board of Regents, Board of Public Education, Office of Public Instruction, local school trustees, school administrators, and the general public actively support the integration of VSO activities into vocational and technical education programs by allowing secondary and postsecondary students to participate in organized regional, state, and national VSO activities as a part of the student's educational program.

The Council supports the concept that VSO activities are in the "curricular" domain and greatly enhances vocational training at the secondary and postsecondary levels. VSO's are integral to vocational education since they:

- are instructional strategies used to develop, improve, and expand occupational competencies relevant to a particular vocational subject matter and as such increase the relevance of instruction;
- are an extension of the classroom/laboratory instructional program which enriches and enhances classroom/laboratory learning;
- present organized activities for students to gain personal and leadership skills making them more employable, and preparing them to become productive citizens and assisting them in assuming positive roles in the home and community;
- demonstrate goals and purposes which parallel the philosophy of vocational education, the subject matter (or program area) which the organization reinforces, and are compatible with the overall purposes and objectives of vocational education today; and
- provide training and realistic learning experiences in an organized educational program which are directly related to the preparation of individuals for employment in careers and preparation for their role as family members.

Unfortunately, membership in Montana's VSO's has declined over the past 7 years, which parallels the decline in total school enrollments and enrollments in vocational education classes. Efforts must be made to reverse this trend. VSO's energize the vocational classroom, curriculum, and learning experience by providing a leadership laboratory in which students can develop, practice and refine skills that distinguish them from others in the workforce. In view of rapid technological advances, global economic competition, and demand for increased levels of vocational and technical education preparation, we must provide leadership and support of VSO's. By fully integrating VSO's into the classroom and curriculum, vocational programs are able to provide students with the edge needed to be adaptable, innovative and competitive in the workforce.

INTEGRATION OF VO-ED/ACADEMICS

Integration of Vo-Ed/Academics

The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education and Office of Public Instruction provide expertise, leadership, guidelines, model programs and encouragement to Montana schools and postsecondary vocational technical institutions for integrating academic and vocational

education through a coherent sequence of courses which will result in both academic and occupational competencies.

Employees report increasing difficultly in finding job applicants who possess the knowledge and skills necessary to perform the job efficiently. Business leaders and others refer to this as the "skills gap." Educational reformers have concentrated almost exclusively on improving academics with little regard for other employee competencies. In 1990, the Council surveyed Montana employers to determine which competencies employers felt were most important. The following were their responses in rank order.

(1) positive work habits and attitudes;
(2) ability to follow directions;
(3) communications (speaking and listening);
(4) (a.) reasoning and problem solving skills;
(b.) interpersonal skills;
(5) ability to assume responsibilities;
(6) reading and writing skills;
(7) (a.) basic math/science skills;
(b.) personal appearance and grooming;
(8) specific vocational technical skills;
(9) leadership skills; and
(10) understanding of economic concepts.

The Council also asked the question, "Which subjects or training areas do employers prefer for their employees." The results were:

29%	Vocational Education
24%	Math
24%	English
15%	Computers
6%	Science
2%	Social Studies

The educational reform movement has primarily concentrated on academic learning and the college bound. Congress, however, has recognized the value, importance and necessity of integrating academic and vocational education and included it as a request for use of funds in the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments of 1990, P.L. 101-392

Integrating academic and vocational education is essential for improving the knowledge, skill and competencies of all students and will result in better equipping individuals for the job, further education, or for life.

Many approaches have been developed and successfully implemented throughout the nation. These include:

- Incorporating academic competencies (including basic skills) into vocational education courses;
- Encouraging academic and vocational teachers to incorporate academic competencies in vocational courses;
- Making academic courses more applied or vocationally relevant, i.e., through development of applied academic courses such as Principles of Technology, Applied Mathematics, Applied Communications, Applied Biology/Chemistry, and Applied Geology;
- Implementing horizontal curriculum alignment, i.e. coordinating courses;

- Implementing vertical curriculum alignment, i.e. creating sequences of courses;
- Developing "academy schools," or schools-within-a-school where there is greater opportunity to coordinate and provide sequential learning over time;
- Creating magnet schools or single occupation high schools;
- Replacing conventional academic departments with departments organized by occupational clusters, i.e., business cluster, public service cluster, technology cluster, health cluster, etc.; and
- mixing teachers from different occupational clusters into professional clusters comprised of students of differing career paths and instructors from differing occupational majors.

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